

Current Economic Programs Printed Survey Results: by the *Current Industrial Reports* Statistics Users Respondent Base

U.S. Census Bureau
Current Economic Statistics User Survey

OMB CQM-26 (Rev.5/5/98)

I. DATA CONTENT

Your answers identifying the survey data you use will help us understand our users' patterns of data use.

1. Which Current Economic Statistics from the Census Bureau do you use? (Mark all that apply.)

(1) Monthly

0.0%;	0	None
53.0%;	124	Retail Sales
44.4%;	104	Wholesale Trade
64.5%;	151	Manufacturing/Trade Inventory/Sales
55.1%;	129	Housing Starts
44.0%;	103	Building Permits
44.0%;	103	New Home Sales
39.3%;	92	Value of New Construction Put in Place
29.5%;	69	Housing Completions
26.9%;	63	Expenditures for Residential Improvements
32.1%;	75	New Residential Construction
16.7%;	39	New Mobile Home Placements
50.0%;	117	Monthly Imports and Exports
76.1%;	178	Current Industrial Reports
60.3%;	141	Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, Orders

Replies 234; Forms 247

(2) Quarterly

40.1%;	99	Quarterly Financial Report
100.0%;	247	Current Industrial Reports
3.6%;	9	Federal Assistance Awards Data System
8.1%;	20	Quarterly Tax Survey
3.6%;	9	Quarterly Public Employee Retirement

Replies 247; Forms 247

(3) Annual

46.8%;	109	Annual Retail Trade
46.4%;	108	Annual (Wholesale) Trade
23.6%;	55	Annual Survey of Communications
26.6%;	62	Transportation Annual Survey
29.2%;	68	Service Annual Survey
46.8%;	109	County Business Patterns

23.6%;	55	ZIP Code Business Patterns
49.8%;	116	Statistics of U.S. Businesses
24.0%;	56	Characteristics of New Housing
31.8%;	74	Annual Building Permits
22.3%;	52	New Residential Construction in Selected Metropolitan Areas
39.1%;	91	Annual Capital Expenditures
74.2%;	173	Annual Survey of Manufactures
79.4%;	185	Current Industrial Reports
26.2%;	61	Research and Development Survey
36.1%;	84	Plant Capacity Utilization
10.3%;	24	Education Finance Survey
11.6%;	27	State Tax Collection Survey
5.6%;	13	Annual Public Employee Retirement
12.9%;	30	Annual Survey of Public Employment
9.9%;	23	Consolidated Federal Funds Report
15.5%;	36	State Government Finances
48.1%;	112	Annual Imports and Exports

Replies 233; Forms 247

II. DATA DELIVERY

The Census Bureau is considering use of the Internet as the primary method of data delivery. By completing the following questions, you will help us retain the most essential delivery formats and design the best possible data delivery service.

(4) 2. How do you receive current economic data now? (Mark all that apply.)

88.9%;	217	Printed Publications	16.8%;	41	Diskettes
78.3%;	191	World Wide Web (Internet)	15.6%;	38	Direct (E-mail) delivery
33.2%;	81	CD-ROMs	0.8%;	2	Regular mail
20.1%;	49	FAX	6.6%;	16	Other

Replies 244; Forms 247

- EBB (of Stat-USA) Phone calls
- visit to Census release library and requests to commerce library.
- from others in the organization we use ftp site extensively.
- Would prefer receiving printed schedules to let me know what data is available via internet.
- Library
- Electronic "Bulletin Boards"
- TAPE 1/2
- Check values by telephone
- also use microfiche in some cases.
- time-share vendor (private)
- DRI DATABASE
- Internet, ProNet
- Fax from Japanese media
- FTP - Internet
- CD Rom & Publications in Library
- Subscribe to America Statistic Index on Microfiche
- STAT-USA+WEFA Group

(5) 3. What format do you PREFER when downloading data for further manipulation? (Mark all that apply.)

70.4%; 162 Spreadsheet (e.g., wkl, xls, etc...)
31.3%; 72 Database (e.g., dbf, mdb, etc...)
23.0%; 53 ASCII delimited
20.0%; 46 Retrieve from print or screen and enter manually
18.3%; 42 ASCII flat files
12.6%; 29 Do not manipulate data
3.0%; 7 Other

Replies 230; Forms 247

- pdf format
 - Sas data sets
 - Charts and Trends
 - to be determined
 - Access database
 - PDF Files
-

4. What capabilities do you want on the Census Internet site? (For each line, indicate the degree of your preferences, from 5 [high] to 1 [low].)

(6) a. Direct (E-mail) delivery:

52.6%;	113	5	16.7%;	36	3	7.9%;	17	1
12.1%;	26	4	5.1%;	11	2	5.6%;	12	Don't know

Replies 215; Forms 247

(7) b. E-mail notification:

47.8%;	99	5	18.4%;	38	3	8.2%;	17	1
12.6%;	26	4	7.2%;	15	2	5.8%;	12	Don't know

Replies 207; Forms 247

(8) c. Retrieve/display to screen:

60.7%;	125	5	16.0%;	33	3	3.9%;	8	1
12.1%;	25	4	2.9%;	6	2	4.4%;	9	Don't know

Replies 206; Forms 247

(9) d. Search:

73.9%;	164	5	11.3%;	25	3	1.4%;	3	1
9.9%;	22	4	0.9%;	2	2	2.7%;	6	Don't know

Replies 222; Forms 247

(10) e. Download complete data sets:

66.8%;	147	5	10.5%;	23	3	1.8%;	4	1
11.4%;	25	4	6.4%;	14	2	3.2%;	7	Don't know

Replies 220; Forms 247

(11) f. Download selected data:

74.0%;	165	5	5.4%;	12	3	1.3%;	3	1
13.0%;	29	4	2.7%;	6	2	3.6%;	8	Don't know

Replies 223; Forms 247

(12) g. Software help/tutorials:

24.9%;	49	5	29.9%;	59	3	6.6%;	13	1
19.3%;	38	4	13.7%;	27	2	5.6%;	11	Don't know

Replies 197; Forms 247

(13) h. Publication-quality printing:

36.4%;	76	5	21.5%;	45	3	9.6%;	20	1
15.3%;	32	4	13.9%;	29	2	3.3%;	7	Don't know

Replies 209; Forms 247

(14) i. Charts and graphs:

33.6%;	71	5	19.0%;	40	3	10.9%;	23	1
17.1%;	36	4	15.6%;	33	2	3.8%;	8	Don't know

Replies 211; Forms 247

(15) j. Geographic maps:

24.6%;	49	5	17.1%;	34	3	15.6%;	31	1
19.6%;	39	4	16.6%;	33	2	6.5%;	13	Don't know

Replies 199; Forms 247

(16) k. Other, please specify:

76.2%;	16	electronic bulletin board	23.8%;	5	Other
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Replies 21; Forms 247

- Publications like QFR to be in spreadsheet format or mdb for easy data manipulation after downloading.
 - Structure and specialists available to help researchers find data.
 - Internet site very important to receive data from.
 - electronic
 - Don't know if electronic bulletin board was used
-

(17) l. Electronic Bulletin Board (To collect write-ins)

33.3%;	1	5	0.0%;	0	3	0.0%;	0	1
33.3%;	1	4	33.3%;	1	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 3; Forms 247

III. DATA USAGE

Your answers describing how you use the data will help us design the most effective Current Economic Statistics retrieval tool.

(18) 5. Do you combine/compare/merge data from more than one source listed in Question 1?

28.4%; 67 No	71.6%; 169 Yes
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Replies 236; Forms 247

(19) 6. What time periods do you consider when using these data? (Mark X all that apply.)

66.5%; 159 trends up to 5 years	41.4%; 99 trends up to 1 year
62.8%; 150 5+ years	0.0%; 0 Other
42.3%; 101 latest 1 or 2 periods	

Replies 239; Forms 247

(20) 7. How do you use the data? (Mark all that apply.)

50.0%; 119 Create value-added products/services
35.3%; 84 Perform patron/client inquiries
34.5%; 82 Inform marketing decisions
23.9%; 57 Republish in newspaper/journal
22.3%; 53 Inform investment decisions
17.6%; 42 Store reports/printouts for archival purposes
8.0%; 19 Locate new sites
0.0%; 0 Other

Replies 238; Forms 247

• [none]

(21) 8. What explanatory information do you consult when using these data? (Mark all that apply.)

72.9%; 167 Definition of terms
61.1%; 140 Narrative text describing survey results
51.5%; 118 Sampling and estimation methodology
42.8%; 98 Survey design
9.2%; 21 None
3.1%; 7 Other

Replies 229; Forms 247

- Explanations of data changes/revisions
 - short trend summary is extremely helpful-where possible.
 - Comparisons to earlier surveys and/or similar data from other agencies--e.g. census to BEA in one estimates.
 - Census Bureau Staff
 - footnotes (CIR)
 - AD HOC
 - Phone calls to Census and or DOL
-

(22) 9. Do you have any pressing data or information needs that are not currently being met?

-
- You should have a central source for sales for all SIC codes. The data could be more timely.
 - We are very much interested in unadjusted counterparts of tables 7 & 8 of the FT900 release being made available on internet on the day of release. Publications like QFR also need to be made

- available in spreadsheet or mdb for us to further manipulate data.
- Value of the U.S. apparel protection reported in the CIR - Need URGENTLY!!
- Non-residential building permit data.
- Yes--Need more timely and more defined (i.e.4-digit SIC code) SUB-NATIONAL data.
- Retail Trade Monthly - Regional Data Survey - Blue Pages, Building Permits - Non-Resident & Additions.
- Print publications no longer available, yet there is no notice that the print publication will no longer exist. Impossible to find the exact publication on the Internet so clients can compare and update printed data. Current information available but how long will older information remain available?
- R & D expenditures by industry (2 & 3 - digit codes) capital expenditures by industry (2 & 3 - digit codes)
- If I request "personal income 1989-1992 monthly", the database would show me what I requested data.
- Categories are too broad.
- I need detailed tract data by state, in addition to country. Export restrictions by country and region are more important than before (move in demand).
- need 6-digit information
- "807" Production-sharing trade at the 2-digit SIC level showing total U.S. import value and the value of U.S. components sent offshore for assembly.
- Need more monthly physical output data for manufacturing.
- Monthly retail sales were previously available by U.S. region! We need this!
- No.
- Selected salaries for selected industries & occupations.
- MCD Business Patterns, Massachusetts is doing away with county government, MCD income estimates.
- Timely release of data in an easy-to-access format (ie: XLS, 123, etc.) with revisions and option of pulling complete time series.
- Non-residential building permits--number by type of building.
- The availability of Residential and Commercial Building Permit Data.
- Better capital expenditure data and Better motor vehicle data.
- More timely data.
- Non-residential building permits data and value of new non-residential construction part in place.
- More detailed retail information.
- Keeping ____ disaggregated data sets ____ possible that are consistent, and therefore directly comparable is very helpful.
- 1) NAICS to harmonized code concordance. 2) Timely plant capacity utilization at greatest detail level possible. 3) Windows version import data/monthly annual easy to use historical with full detail. 4) New Home sales (without land).
- We are always looking for very current information. We normally use Census data for historical trends and background.
- Resume geographic estimates of retail sales.
- YES! Bring back non-residential state/local permits authorized! This was a severe loss for interpreting local economic trends. Also, more geographic detail, more frequently.
- More frequent substate mtg. stats (annual survey is state wide only)
- More detailed annual (quarterly) production data on high technologies (electronics).
- Household Expenditure Data at State Level.
- I need quarter-by-quarter growth figures in areas such as sales, inventories, GOP, construction, etc.
- Regional retail sales (metropolitan area) monthly non-residential building permits by metropolitan area monthly.
- 1). Employment in types of projects, such as residential construction. 2). Construction productivity measures.
- investment plans by SIC
- None that I can think of at the moment
- We want SIC data at the product level by region. Please make every effort to provide locational tags to Canadian & Mexican data. Full country data profiles are not sufficient.
- Business starts by SIC at the County level.
- The 1997 Census is not out yet.

- Currency is always an issue, but I am also cognizant of the constraints on your end.
- 1). Inventory by stage for M3 categories. 2). Separation of electronic components into semiconductors and other.
- Need more detailed annual data for 6 digit SIC codes
- Place and regional economic data sets in relation to population/race trends.
- Geographic data by product class, especially in county business patterns. Totals at the 4-digit industry level aren't detailed enough.
- Move capital expenditure data--more frequent, more detailed
- Information and quantity manufactured about vertical drilling rigs and horizontal drilling rig equipment.
- Service Data on an annual/quarterly/monthly basis by 2,3, & 4-digit SIC!
- Relate the measure "value added less total compensation of employees net income/operating profit and corresponding equity capital/total capital employed.
- Housing Starts by State; Retail Sales by State
- Website is extremely difficult to navigate.
- Would like to see MA33L on quarterly basis.
- Timelines of making data available in the WEB.
- Need to simplify getting quick data.
- Elimination of Group II sales data and problems
- Economic data for lower half and upper half of the work force.
- Imports and exports by 4-digit SIC. Very important--in print. Publication form--quarterly.
- Quarterly data, analyzed growth rates for all statistics. Currently, only some of the data is shown as a quarterly growth rate analyzed.
- Population Projections
- The more detailed (down to specific product line) the better.
- Non-residential construction data outside California! Bring it back!
- More frequent release of capex, 6-digit numbers access to NAICS-reclassified data.
- Information on type of procurement contracts by NASA and DOD to the space industry.
- We have a need for long historical time series and for long-term forecasts.
- Bring back retail sales at metropolitan area level.
- Commercial Building Permits County level on a timely basis.
- As a foreign academic library, we are concerned about cost of access.
- Report on production of industrial fabrics
- Yes-I need non-residential construction series (commercial, industrial, etc.) on a geographic basis--as used to be done!

IV. INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION ISSUES

We will soon begin restructuring the Current Economic Surveys based on the new North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Your answers will help us ensure that these surveys continue to provide the economic information needed by markets, policy makers, and business people. For more information on NAICS, see the Bureau's web site: <http://www.census.gov/NAICS>.

(24) 10. At what levels of detail do you MOST FREQUENTLY USE industry data classified by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)? (Mark all that apply.)

77.2%;	183	4-digit industries (or maximum detail I can get)
40.9%;	97	Sector totals (SIC division); e.g., Manufacturing or Retail Trade
39.2%;	93	2-digit major groups
38.0%;	90	3-digit industry groups
5.9%;	14	NA (don't use SIC-based data)
4.2%;	10	Other

Replies 237; Forms 247

-
- 6 TO 10 digit
 - digit SIC product codes
 - 7-digit in some cases
 - 3
 - Greater detail when available
 - The greatest level available--CIR level. Product level.
 - sub-groups within 4-digit
 - seven digit
 - Product Codes
 - Up to 6-7 digit
-

(25) 11. Were you aware that the SIC system is being replaced by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)?

25.2%; 60 I was unaware of this
 29.4%; 70 I am partially aware, but lack details
 45.4%; 108 I am aware and understand some implications

Replies 238; Forms 247

12. Would you like to receive more information about NAICS?

(26) Yes, please send me - (Mark all that apply)

89.2%; 149	A brochure that explains NAICS	35.3%; 59	Conference announcements
65.9%; 110	NAICS implementation plans	6.6%; 11	Other

Replies 167; Forms 247

- A copy
 - Comparison-SIC VS. NAICS Similar to when SIC definitions change.
 - Send info on NAICS comparability with existing SIC data.
 - E-Mail to me
 - A manual and numerical list
 - Definitions of NAICS codes.
 - I am awaiting CD-ROM!
 - Already know
 - Booklet with new codes
-

(27) No Thanks -

63.0%; 46 I will check the Census Bureau's web site (www.census.gov/naics)
 37.0%; 27 I don't need more information about NAICS

Replies 73; Forms 247

V. USER PROFILE

Please tell us about yourself so we may serve you better.

(28) 13. Type of organization.

49.8%; 119	Business	4.2%; 10	Individual
16.3%; 39	Government	3.3%; 8	Media
13.0%; 31	Academic/Research	0.4%; 1	Library
8.4%; 20	Association	4.6%; 11	Other

-
- You should include questions on technology usage in your census questions (in the 10 year census).
 - It would be nice to have all reports available in spreadsheets format. For any publication reports that contain large tables and data, mdb file format would be an ideal too.
 - The computerized data is fine when know exactly which dat you want. It is not so good when you want to know what is available and related information; in this case the printed publication e.g. censu of Manufactures, is far superior.
 - The Bureau of the Census information is becoming increasingly important to our readers and clients. the better quality of dat has helped readers and clients become more internationally competitive. Keep up the good job!
 - I have never dealt with a government organization as polite, knowledgeable, helpful & responsive as I have from all the people at the Census Bureau (in the current Industrial report area).
 - I suport the move toward Internet data delivery because it should make data available faster and at a lower cost. the challenge is to make it easy for the widest variety of data users as possible to retrieve the data the need.

Example: I use County Business Patterns to track number of establishment for certain industries by state. I believe dat users on the Internet currently can select only one year at a time and one state at a time. the ability to put together summary tables based on selections would help a lot.

- The Bureau of the Census has done a great job with it's web sites. Wth the exception of some unpublished data, everything is available through the internet. The unpublished data is received by direct e-mail.
- Survey of manufacturing have input from business. The categories often do not match the real world.
- In our work with furniture manufacturers and retailers we consistently need breakdowns of mrgs. shipments by product classification (ie. bedroom) on a more timely basis & retail sales at a smaller geographic level.
- A published paper version should always be made available for purchase to the public. Information being available on the internet is nice, yet it is a completely different animal than having a hard copy version of the information. An example: I can receive my new off the internet, but I still prefer to get my newspaper in the morning for reading at my leisure away from a computer.
- When is 1997 Census to be available? Please keep as much of the data in print as possible-- Thanks!
- Census bureau data is always helpful--the data you provide enhances our publication and enables readers to make informal business decisions.
- Documents need to more clearly state whom to contact for follow-up information.
- You have set up an excellent web site that is easy to use, fast and usually supplies me with the information I'm seeking.
- Thank you for your great service!
- Census data has proven invaluable to in-depth country comparisons of productivity in sectors extremely valuable organization.

Please keep going with the detailed data, comparable time series (IS NAICS comparable?) and aggregate numbers.

- Your credibility is a great strength.
- We use business/commercial statistics when writing market reports. We are not regular users of any of the Census publications, but value them highly in our individual case work.
- Being able to download from the web site has generally worked very well for us. The only troublesome aspect is that the page numbers of the PDF documents differ form the page numbers in their taple of contents (e.g. - printing page 18 gets you page 12 of the document).

A big "thank you" to the Census specialists who have been most helpful and polite when we've called with questions.

- We serve a varied clientele (academic, business, government, and private citizens) and work across many subject. Census data are absolutely vital to us. Our biggest need is for more geographic area detail more frequently (state, county, place, if possible). Users often do not understand the 5 yr. gaps and lag time for the major Economic Surveys that offer such detail, much

- less the 10 yr. decennial cycle. The internet is a great help in speeding "publication", but we find access is not yet universal. We still download and print entire documents for guide reference and historical purposes. I am concerned about just how long the electronic medi will remain accurate and usable as technology changes. How will the Bureau deal with these problems?
- Good job on the web site.
- Would like more detail on Semiconductor Industry (SIC 3674) and SIC 3661 & 3669 communicaitons equipment. Also, computers SIC 3575,3577,3578, 35,79. Would like more details on subcategories in terms of sales dollars and total units sold.
- You provide very useful information. Please do not switch any data over to PDF if possible make ASM and Census Manufacturing available as text or some other useable format.
- Data validity in the NAICS project is one of our concerns. Has any provision been for cross checks of the data?
- Respondent provided voluminous, illegible comments throughout that could not be deciphered to record.
- M3 data for office and computer appears to be overly strong, probably because software is being counted instead of just hardware.
- State and Local Government Finance Estimates, by State. We appreciate having this information on the Internet but wish the report was still published. Is there any way of compiling the data sooner? It is almost too old to be of any use.
- We look forward to working with you on the upcoming Census.
- Tables which have no column headings and which one must consult separate documents are highly confusing.
- Current setup on the web is extremely frustratingly for someone trying to print/downlad data and reports

-> Make .XLS files available with lots of historical data.

___ Use .PDF filrds for pasting your releases -Having to flow ascii into a word processor and reformat is not the way to go. Email sub would be helpful

- I appreciate receiving this survey.
- I will be continuing my studies in Europe from where I will communicate with my colleagues.
- Would be helpful if classes were offered in best techniques when seeking govt. data on the Web.

Location on Web tha would state what media given U.S. Govt. was available in (papers, Internet, etc.)

- When converting to NAICS providing 10 years of history would be extremely valuable.
 - We have developed "Productivity Enhancement and Control (Peacon) Plan." This plan will solve 20 major economic problems of the U.S. and provide about \$10,000 to all wage earners earning up to \$200,000. It will double the minimum wage, reduce unemployment to 2% reduce poverty to 2% and provide health care benefits and solve other economic problems. Over 98% of the work force will benefit at the the cost of upper 2%, whose income will be reduced considerably.
 - Most interested in current industrial reports (MA36H) regarding electronic motors (product codes 3621215 - 3621219, 322122-362112P), and imports/exports of the same (ref: HTS 850 etc.)
- Thanks for asking?

P.S. Also interested in small single phase motors (2-digit) 362111A--362123F

- I use the TPIS system and right now ? to the Forest Service fire wall. I am not able to download files that are over 1,000 rows long. This does create some headaches since several of my ? have been over 10,000 rows in length. I would also be helpful if the selected commodities were totaled for each country and a world total created for the selected commodities (as was done when this data was accessed through ? at NIH).
- We love the Census Bureau! Clear publications indices and ease of search engines on the Internet site are very important to us. Also, choice of how to download data is good, not all users need or can use spreadsheet software.
- I appreciate the value of your service! Educators use information for social profit.
- prefer e-mail
- Surveys are informative; Good source for benchmarking; Would like to see more details on

- industries.
- Speed up release of industry (manufacturing) data (often 1996 is most recent); Establish help desk (more capable than present) to help "dig into" the numbers.
- The Website can be quite cumbersome to search sometimes.
- I use your "Telephone contacts for Data Users" and phone for help and information--of ten. I am very pleased with the response and helpfulness of all the people at Census, from receptionists to analysts. It would be nice to get it regularly. I forget, from year to year, to send for updates, until I notice that some contact names are out of date.

Figure 1: